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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/617,272	07/10/2003	Yoshimitsu Arai	032405.147	2473
25461	7590	08/19/2005	EXAMINER	
SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP 1230 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. SUITE 3100, PROMENADE II ATLANTA, GA 30309-3592			RESTIFO, JEFFREY J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3618	

DATE MAILED: 08/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/617,272	ARAI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jeffrey J. Restifo	3618	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 June 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 6/3/05 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Acknowledgments***

1. Acknowledgment is made of the amendment filed 6/3/05.

### ***Drawings***

2. The drawings were received on 6/3/05. These drawings are approved.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Felzer (US 3,827,525 A) and in further view of Ito (US 5,203,749 A) and Owen (US 6,041,881 A).

Felzer discloses a vehicle comprising a floor panel defining a toe board and a floor tunnel portion 40 that extends rearwardly and inclined at the front for a power transmitting device (or engine with transmission) 36 each inherently in a casing, as shown in figures 1-5. Felzer does not disclose the input shaft as being above the output shaft. Ito does disclose a transmission comprising an input shaft 11 as being above the output shaft 12, as shown in figure 1. It would have been obvious to one having

Art Unit: 3618

ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have provided the vehicle of Felzer with the transmission of Ito in order to shorten the length of the transmission.

Neither Felzer nor Ito disclose a projecting portion on the transmission casing. Owen does disclose projecting portions or rods 21,26 for reinforcing a transmission case 6, as shown in figure 1. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have provided the vehicle of Felzer as modified by Ito with the projection rods of Owen in order to further protect the transmission from damage in a collision.

With respect to claims 6-8, None of Felzer, Ito, or Owen explicitly disclose auxiliary equipment under the floor tunnel. The use of turbochargers and/or exhaust catalysts are conventional in the art and it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have provided the vehicle of Felzer with a turbocharger and/or exhaust catalyst in order to increase horsepower and decrease emissions, as is commonly applied in the art.

### ***Response to Arguments***

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The newly added limitations warranted the new reference of Owen.

***Conclusion***

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

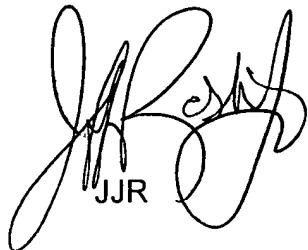
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey J. Restifo whose telephone number is (571) 272-6697. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (10:00-6:00), alternate Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christopher P. Ellis can be reached on (571) 272-6914. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3618

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JJR". Below the signature, the initials "JJR" are printed in a smaller, sans-serif font.

Jeffrey J. Restifo  
Examiner  
Art Unit 3618